

# **WATER ALLOCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IMPACT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**12-03-02 at the Offices of the RI Economic Policy Council**

**Next meeting of subcommittee: January 21, 2002 at 9 AM (same place)**

### **Present**

Beth Collins	RI Economic Policy Council
Connie McGreavy	Water Resource Board
Judith Benedict	
Katherine Wallace	Brown University
Richard Blodgett	Providence Water Supply Board
Russ Chateneauf	RI Dept. of Env. Mgt-Wetlands
Scott Millar	DEM – Sustainable Watersheds
Christine Lipsky	DEM – F&W
Tim Tyrell	URI, Environmental and Natural Resource Economics

### **1. What do we know about water use? - Katherine Wallace**

- Katherine handed out a packet titled “Water-Use Data in Rhode Island, 1995 & 2000,” the details of which are not repeated in the minutes. Katherine’s analysis was predicated on data provided by the US Geological Survey (USGS).
- In RI, domestic water use is the big player. Of that outdoor water use is big.
- Care is needed to interpret the “agriculture” category because golf courses are categorized with irrigation that is sometimes grouped under agriculture.
- Non-account water includes leakage and waste that can range from 5%-30% of water lost.
- The percentage of water going to agriculture in the Pawcatuck appears to have increased since some agriculture water use comes from the public water supply.
- We do not have growth numbers for 2000 yet.
- The Blackstone’s water use profile mimics the entire state – so it makes sense to start there
- The Pawcatuck is the fastest growing, stress is documented, there are interesting biological components. Stress on Pawcatuck also related to Narragansett, which gets water from the Pawcatuck. For these reasons, it is important to look at the Pawcatuck also.
- The domestic water use from self-supply is an estimate. The USGS also estimates water use for commercial and industrial self-supply as well as for agriculture.
- The Out-of-Basin transfer group is working on where water comes from and where it goes. Can this be mapped? If we can get the information, Katherine will look at the feasibility of mapping it.

### **2. What kinds of drought economic impact statements are out there? – Beth Collins**

Beth summarizes a few different kinds of approaches for impact studies and the different kind of information they produce. Her handout "Summary of selected Impact Studies" will be available on the website with the minutes.

### **3. Discuss and possibly adopt mission and deliverables to share with the larger group**

The committee discussed and revised the draft mission and deliverables. Tim Tyrell suggested three organizing questions: When do we hit capacity constraints? Where? And what are the driving forces causing us to hit capacity?

Beth agreed to revise the mission and deliverables based on the discussion and email it around. The group expressed a desire to get past tinkering with the mission and deliverables and work on a short-term task list.

How much water is sold? What is the yield capacity of our water supply systems? -- the water supply system management plans have 25 spreadsheets that should answer this question and many others. Tim Tyrell volunteered to look at the spreadsheets for the group. Katherine will look at them to see if the water transfers can be mapped.

Water use per unit should be the same as our nearby states. Is there information from neighboring states we can borrow to substitute for local information we don't have?

At the current rate of growth, we will reach build out in X time.

Do we need a straw man explanation that we can tear apart?

Katherine agreed to look for population growth figures by watershed or water district.

Judith will do more digging on the documentation of environmental impacts.

### **4. Set Next Meeting: January 21, 2003 at 9 AM at the Economic Policy Council**

Earlier in the meeting we resisted the urge to focus our study down to one watershed, but we decided to spend the January meeting on the Blackstone so we can get into the details. We will post maps around the walls and each come prepared to share what we know on the Blackstone.

Several committee members volunteered for tasks under item 3. There are more tasks for anyone is willing to volunteer.

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The website for more information about the Water Allocation Project or for copies of handouts mentioned in the minutes: [www.wrb.state.ri.us](http://www.wrb.state.ri.us)